

## VHS Honor Roll

The following students were named to the Vernonia High School academic Honor Roll for the 2010-11 first quarter. Grade Point Averages (GPA) are on a scale of 1-4, with 4 equaling a perfect score.

Principal's Honors, 4.00 – Aleksa Ajacimovic, Jacob Alf, Ashlee Archer, Rachel Brown, Kaytee Burghard, Austin Cutright, Daniele Della Rossa, Janae Easlon, Katie Ellington, Mackenzie Frantz, Laura Hein, Quinlan Johansen, Samantha Lindauer, Marina Mekidiche, Mason Roberts, Ryan Sandstrom, Kelly Smith, Ellyssa Szlavich, Nicole Thompson, Natalie Wallace, and Samantha Wallace.

High Honors, 3.50-3.99 – Silvia Barberis, Joseph Benes, Skylar Binford, Joshua Brandt, Kelsey Brandt, Jacob Bringham, Charlette Burghard, Joshua Butcher, Crystal-Ann Carreon, Holly Cavett, Rowan Cheney, Christopher Dass, Robin Elliott, Brandy Fosdick, Jessica Gardner, Kristina Halvorson, Cierra Henson,  
**See VHS on page 28**

## VMS Honor Roll

The following students were named to the Vernonia Middle School academic Honor Roll for the 2010-11 first quarter.

Principal's Honors, 4.00 – Macayla Adams, Emilee Easlon, Brett Jones, Jocie Ranay-Roberts, Meghan Sullivan, Dylan Taylor, and Chase Tolonen.

High Honors, 3.50-3.99 – Tristan Adams, Kayla Aronhalt, Marley Bower, Brittany Brandt, Jacob Butcher, Zi\_Xian Chen, Pearl Cook, Kaitlyn Eyrrick, Jazmine Harper, Corey Hieronimus, Nathanael McCroskey-Izzett, Sheyanne Pedersen, Megan Rice, Jamie Scott, Summer Snow, Winter Snow, Autumn Sorenson, Jessica Springfield, and Payton Wolf.

Honors, 3.25-3.49 – Emily  
**See VMS on page 22**

## Can drive, Dec.11

The next pop can drive for Vernonia students will help both the high school trip to Costa Rica, and the Washington, D.C., trip for eighth grade students. It will be held December 11, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., in the covered playshed area.

## Chalk Talk

*Chalk Talk is a column of information about Vernonia schools. This column was provided by Superintendent Ken Cox.*

As I write this school has been cancelled for the past three days, Thanksgiving Day is tomorrow, and I find myself contemplating what I am thankful for, both personally and as a representative of the school district and a member of our community.

On a personal level, I have a lot to be thankful for, I have a job that I enjoy (most of the time) and I get to work with great people. My wife is very supportive of me and the demands that the different aspects of my job place upon us. My children and grandchildren are healthy and doing well in the different aspects of their lives. In reality, I truly have little to complain about, and much to be thankful for.

As I started this school year, I set a goal to spend a bit more time in the classrooms of the district and, for a while there, was able to do so a couple of times a week. I saw students engaged in learning, regardless of their surroundings, teachers who, though perhaps a bit nervous to have me walk in and sit down unannounced, taught with integrity and concern for each child. In one high school classroom I was pleasantly greeted by the students, which made me feel appreciative of them and what they are going through. An example from the student perspective – We recently moved 38 lockers from the WGS basement into the cafeteria so some students could have one. As Mr. Underwood and I discussed how he planned to determine who got a locker and who didn't, he mentioned that one student, a junior, had said "I've never had a locker before."

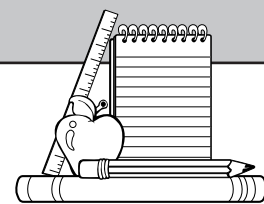
It is my hope that each of us will find thankfulness in some of the little things in life, as we take the time to consider how much we have to be thankful for.

As I consider the fact that we have broken ground on the site of our new schools, my mind is swimming with the names and faces of those who should be mentioned in thanking them for their time, dedication, commitment and tenacity to get us to this point. I think of meeting with two members of the Army Corps of Engineers last month to sign their permit for us to proceed, one of whom I had never met, but he was aware of our project and commented on the efficiency that had accompanied the project paperwork as the result of a consultant, who, under the direction of Steve Effros, our project manager, had met with the Army Corps early to identify concerns and address them before they became an issue. I think of the dedicated group of individuals who, every Friday since last April, participated in a conference call from wherever they were – Seattle, Salem, Washington D.C., Vernonia, to make sure that the same level of concern and addressing the issues helped us receive the Finding Of No Significant Impact (FONSI) that came last week from FEMA. I think of all of those who have participated for the past two years in the Oregon Solutions Vernonia Project, and their commitment to continue through June of next year, helping us find not only the best site, but alternative funding opportunities to make this happen.

One of the most unique and in some ways challenging aspects of our project is that we have had to work on a fundraising campaign as well as determine the design and construction of the new schools. More than a year ago, in one example of the ongoing help of Senator Betsy Johnson, we interviewed a number of firms that could help us with our fundraising. As a result we contracted with the Metropolitan Group, who have also shown a great deal of dedication and tenacity in giving us every opportunity to make our case to groups in Portland and throughout the region.

I could go on and on, but I hope you get the picture. None of us is an island. We must rely on each other for any of us to succeed. As a community member I look to the city council to get to know each other and work together to strengthen our community. Our school board is an example of dedicated individuals who have put aside some of their differences to make a difference in the lives of our children, and consequently have a positive impact on the rest of the community. I am thankful to have the opportunity to work with them on a regular basis.

Finally, I am thankful that I have so much to be thankful for, great administrators and district office staff, who help me get my job done, and the rest of the staff who helps them get their job done, and none of us would even have a job if it weren't for the kids. I am thankful for them (as I hope you are), for their smiles, their energy, and their eagerness to learn and to please. Thanksgiving was last week, but it is my hope that each of us will take a little time each day to think about the many things we have to be thankful for. It is a great way to start the day.



## Car seat event on December 9

Columbia County Safe Kids, in partnership with Alliance for Community Traffic Safety (ACTS Oregon) and several community partners, will be holding a child safety seat check-up clinic on Thursday, December 9, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.

The free clinic will be held in St. Helens at the St. Helens Fire Station, 105 S. 12th Street. The clinic provides an opportunity to have a child safety seat checked by a certified technician who can correct misuse, help with installation and teach you how to correctly install the seat. Technicians can also check for seat recalls. There is no cost to have a technician

check your child safety seats. Please plan to spend 30-60 minutes at the event.

Additionally, through a grant funded by the Oregon Department of Transportation, Columbia County Safe Kids is able to provide low-cost child safety seats to families in need. Families who receive Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) should contact their worker about payment for a seat.

For more information about the clinic or the Columbia County child safety seat program, contact the Commission on Children and Families at 503-397-7211.

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